GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:456
ANSWERED ON:26.08.2004
ADVERTISEMENTS THROUGH MEDIA
Kushwaha Shri Narendra Kumar

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the main purpose of advertisements through media is to promote the sale of various products;

(b) if so, whether it is not essential for the products advertised through Government controlled media to have product quality certificate;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken for fixing criteria for quality certificate for advertised products; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government against obscene advertisements?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATIOM AND BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.456 FOR ANSWER ON 26.08.2004.

(a) to (d) : The Press in India is free from Government control. The Press Council of India is statutory authority established for preserving the freedom of the Press and for maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India

As regards the electronic media, Prasar Bharati, a statutory autonomous Corporation, follows its own code for commercial advertising, which contains stringent provisions for safeguarding the interest of society in general, and consumers in particular.

Advertisements transmitted/re-transmitted through the Cable Television Network are required to adhere to the provisions of the Advertising Code prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules 1994 which inter-alia prescribe that advertisements shall conform the laws of the country, the product advertised shall not suffer from any defect or deficiency as mentioned in the Consumer Protection Act 1986, and shall not contain references which are likely to lead the public to infer that the product advertised has some miraculous property or quality which is difficult of being proved.

(e) Press Council of India has set norms for Journalistic ethics according to which newspapers/journals shall not publish anything that is obscene, vulgar or offends public good taste. The PCI also takes cognizance suo moto, or looks into specific complaints against obscene and vulgar advertisements in print media.

Doordarshan and All India Radio follow their own Codes, which do not allow obscene advertisements. As regards private Satellite TV channels, advertisements are required to adhere to the Advertising Code prescribed in the Cable Rules which inter-alia prohibit telecast of any advertisement which offends morality, glorifies obscenity, has indecent, vulgar or suggestive or offensive themes or presents a derogatory image of women. Under Section 19 of the Cable Act `Authorized Officer` can take action for violation of the Advertising Code. The Central Government has constituted an inter- ministerial Committee under Section 20 of the Cable Act to take cognizance suo moto or look into specific complaints regarding violation of advertising code.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) certifies films, including that of advertisements for public exhibition under the provisions of Section 5(B) of the Cinematograph Act 1952 and the guidelines framed there under. While certifying the advertisements it is ensured that the advertisements which have any obscene/vulgar contents are either refused or certified after deletion of such scenes.